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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,  
TUESDAY, MAY 18, 2004

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER  
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES  
BRIEFING  
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Blair: Turkey will get a date for EU accession talks -  
Milliyet  
Blair promises support on Cyprus, EU - Hurriyet  
Six-hour lightning visit by Blair - Sabah  
Bush, Blair planning urgent exit from Iraq - Milliyet  
IGC chairman dies in suicide attack - Milliyet  
Rice 'ashamed' of abuse of Iraqis - Aksam  
4,000 US troops in South Korea to deploy to Iraq - Sabah  
Athens, Ankara to reduce defense spending - Hurriyet  
Powell supports Palestine at WEF - Turkiye

OPINION MAKERS

Blair: We'll stay in Iraq until we're done - Cumhuriyet  
Britain will work for Turkey - Zaman  
US wants new bases from Turkey - Cumhuriyet  
Bush, Blair plan to leave Iraq soon - Yeni Safak  
Shiite cities under fire - Radikal  
Powell admits info on mobile Iraqi WMD facilities was false  
- Cumhuriyet  
Israel destroys homes; Palestinians on the road again -  
Zaman  
Israel preparing for massacre - Yeni Safak  
Basayev claims responsibility for Kadirov killing -  
Cumhuriyet  
WB's Vorkink: Turkey's economic balances in order - Radikal

BRIEFING

Tony Blair visits Ankara: British PM Tony Blair paid a six-hour working visit to Ankara on Monday. In a joint press conference with Turkish PM Erdogan, Blair said Turkey would most likely win a date in December to begin entry talks with the EU next year. He also said a ban on flights to northern Cyprus could be scrapped to help ease the international isolation of Turkish Cypriots. However, Blair refrained from making a concrete pledge with regard to Cyprus. Blair and Erdogan agreed to work together on security and migration issues. Blair also asked for Turkish support in Afghanistan and Iraq. Blair ruled out any "quick exit" from Iraq, and said British troops would be kept there until stability is restored. Erdogan noted to Blair that the Iraqi people turned down Turkey's offer to deploy troops in Iraq. "This issue is no longer on the agenda in Ankara," Erdogan said.

US wants new bases from Turkey: The US wants to use Turkey as a military center for controlling the Middle East, the Caucasus, and the Caspian Basin, "Cumhuriyet" claims on its front page today. The Bush Administration wants to clarify all plans, including the Greater Middle East (GME) initiative, before the June NATO Summit in Istanbul. In this light, the US may renew demands from Ankara it had made before the war with Iraq, the paper claims. Washington has asked Ankara to expand Incirlik Airbase and establish naval bases in Trabzon and Samsun. The Americans want to deploy 48 warplanes, 10 tanker planes, and 1,000 military personnel to Incirlik. The US has also requested to use the Karapinar region in Konya province for military exercises. The US is planning these moves within the framework of its bilateral relations with Turkey - that is, outside of the NATO

platform. An anonymous source at the Foreign Ministry said that the US 'has not presented a comprehensive package of demands as it did before the Iraq war.' 'The US is reviewing its forces and bases in the region, and is continuing routine work with Turkey within this context,' the MFA official added. He also noted that US-Turkish relations remain strong. President Bush will be visiting Ankara before going to Istanbul for the NATO Summit. "Cumhuriyet" claims that the US wants to receive a positive response from Turkey to its demands before the Bush visit.

US Human Rights and Democracy report: The US State Department's report on 'Supporting Human Rights and Democracy 2003-2004' says that the US has asked the Turkish government to reopen Halki Seminary in Istanbul, "Cumhuriyet" reports. The US Embassy has stressed the need for free expression of all religions, including Protestantism, Bahaism and Jehovah's Witnesses, the report emphasizes. Turkey has made progress on human rights, but the influence of the military in politics and the use of torture against detainees continues, the report stressed. The US has granted \$894,000 for treatment of torture victims, and will hold an international conference on torture in Ankara next year. The report also notes that the US Embassy in Turkey has been working in close cooperation with Turkish NGOs to strengthen civic society.

Turkey, Greece agree to cut defense spending: Turkish and Greek defense ministers have agreed to make reciprocal cuts in defense spending over the next five years. Turkish Defense Minister Vecdi Gonul conveyed to his Greek counterpart Spiliotopoulos in Brussels on Monday the decision by Ankara to reduce defense spending. Spiliotopoulos welcomed the move. Athens will review its Cyprus doctrine, and Ankara will cooperate with Athens in the fight against terrorism, papers report.

#### EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq/Syria

##### "The Pentagon's Internal War"

Haluk Ulman commented in the economic-political Dunya (5/18): "As the Iraq war turns even more messy, an internal war has started within the Pentagon. There is a pro-Rumsfeld group and a pro-Powell group. It is no secret that the State Department and the Pentagon had serious differences about the Iraq operation. But the recent torture photos brought these disagreements to the forefront among high-ranking officials in the administration. . The history of this internal disagreement goes back to the early days of Iraq war. Before the war, Powell advocated a larger number of troops, while Rumsfeld argued that a smaller-scale troop deployment could be successful with the help of advanced US military technology. In the end, Rumsfeld and his staff have been proven wrong. Even General Myers has admitted this failure. What we have been seeing is the military beginning to take revenge because Rumsfeld did not consider their advice seriously and now wants to blame them for Abu Ghraib."

##### "Syria is next"

Yalcin Dogan wrote in the mass appeal Hurriyet (5/18): "The resolution against Syria, which was sent to Congress by President Bush on May 11, very much resembles the one against Iraq 1.5 years ago. Syria is to face an embargo in many fields and a trade ban on all products except food and medicine. Air routes between Syria and the US are to be blocked. All of this indicates that Syria is next on the list after Iraq. President Bush is apparently not satisfied by bringing so much trouble to the world, so he is now obsessed with Syria. At the same time, initial signs indicate that the EU does not share Bush's view and opposes the US sanctions policy against Syria. A visiting EU delegation in Damascus noted that the US embargo is wrong and pledged support for trade with Syria. The EU says that Syrian goods, including oil and gas destined for European countries, can be transported via Turkey. This means that Turkey will find itself in difficulty with the US if it becomes a route for Syrian products."

##### "The Way Out"

Fikret Bila argued in the mass appeal Milliyet (5/18): "The US and UK are searching for a way out in Iraq by trying to establish an Iraqi government that will have the Iraqis' trust and support but will also defend US and UK interests. Is it possible to have such an administration in Iraq? Would Iraqis support such a government? Moreover, could an Iraqi administration defend US and UK interests after getting such support from its own people? This is not possible. Only a 'puppet government' could allow a continued US and British military presence in Iraq and take

care of their economic and political interests. But this kind of government would never get the support of the Iraqi people. If the choice is left to the people, they will definitely elect an anti-American and anti-British administration, which will most likely be a Shiite government. Secretary Powell already says the US will respect a religious administration in Iraq if that comes out of the election process. The US is no longer interested in the type of government that will be established in Iraq, but only in whether that government will preserve a US and British military presence, prevent violence against US and UK forces, and protect the economic and political interests of the US in Iraq. I would like to think that the US will not allow the Iraqi people to carry Iraq toward a civil war through more ethnic and religious conflict while they are looking for their escape hatch."

EDELMAN